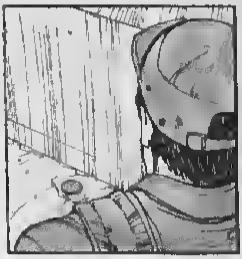
THE TIME IS EARLY IN THE TWENTY-SECOND CENTURY. THE EARTH HAS BEEN UNIFIED UNDER AEGIS, A CENTRAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU RUN EXCLUSIVELY BY BIOROIDS (ENHANCED ARTIFICIAL HUMANS).

UNDER THE BENEVOLENT BUT WATCHFUL EYE OF AEGIS, THE OLD NATIONS ARE RUSHING TO REBUILD FROM THE DESTRUCTION WROUGHT BY THE THIRD WORLD WAR.

YET PEOPLE STILL PAUSE SOMETIMES TO WONDER HOW WAR **REALLY** BEGAN--AND DARK CLOUDS HAVE BEGUN TO GATHER OVER AEGIS ITSELF...



Appleseed

Book Two

Prometheus Unbound

story and art
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English version produced by
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ECLIPSE INTERNATIONAL

Appleseed Book Two : Prometheus Unbound
Published by Eclipse Books
P. O. Box 1099, Forestville, CA 95436
Greg S. Baisden, collection editor
Catherine Yronwode, editor-in-chief • Dean Mullaney, publisher
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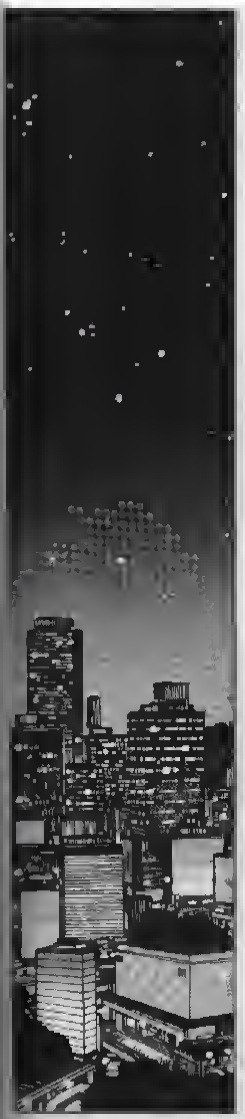
In this English edition of *Appleseed*, the artwork has been reversed
to read left-to-right for the American audience.

First Printing
1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2

ISBN 1-56060-081-0 clothbound edition • ISBN 1-56060-082-9 softcover edition



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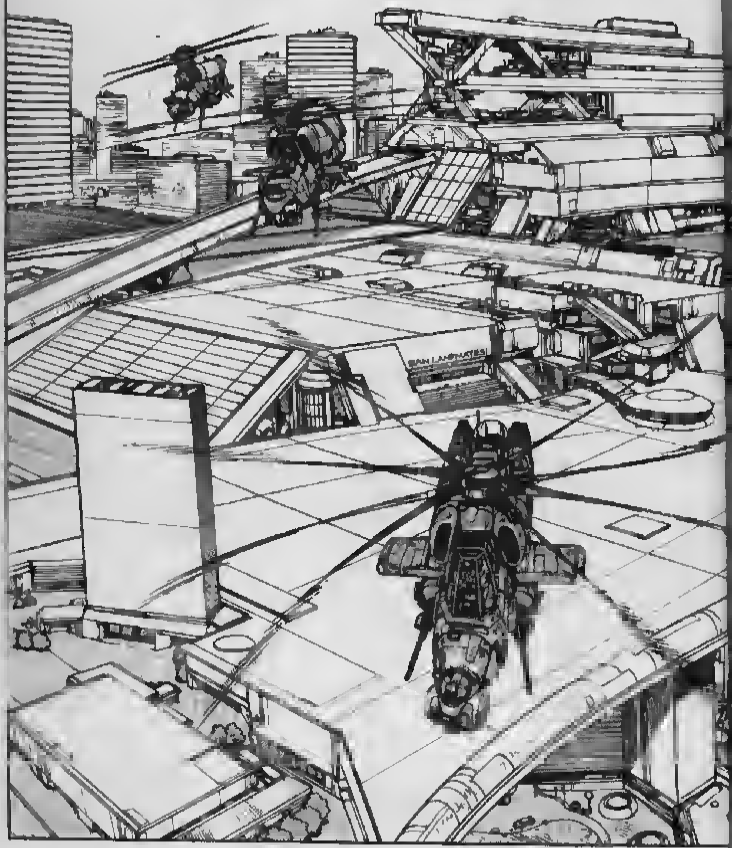
BOOK TWO:

PROMETHEUS



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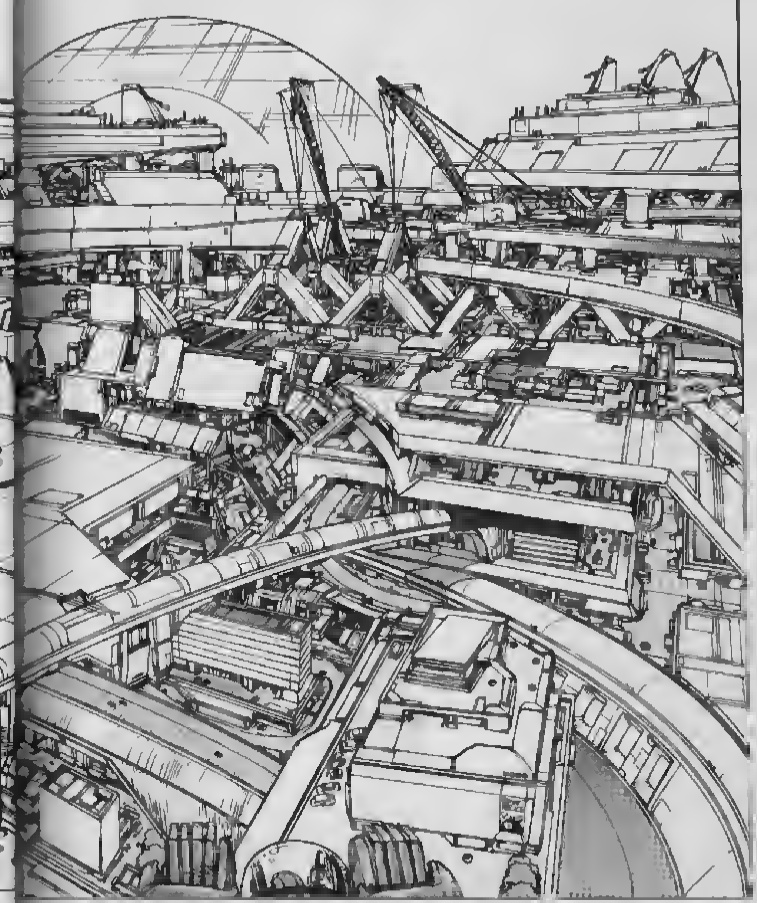


WHP
WHP
WHP
WHP
8. ALIEN
WHP
WHP
WHP
skeek
nmph.
WHP
WHP
WHP
tink

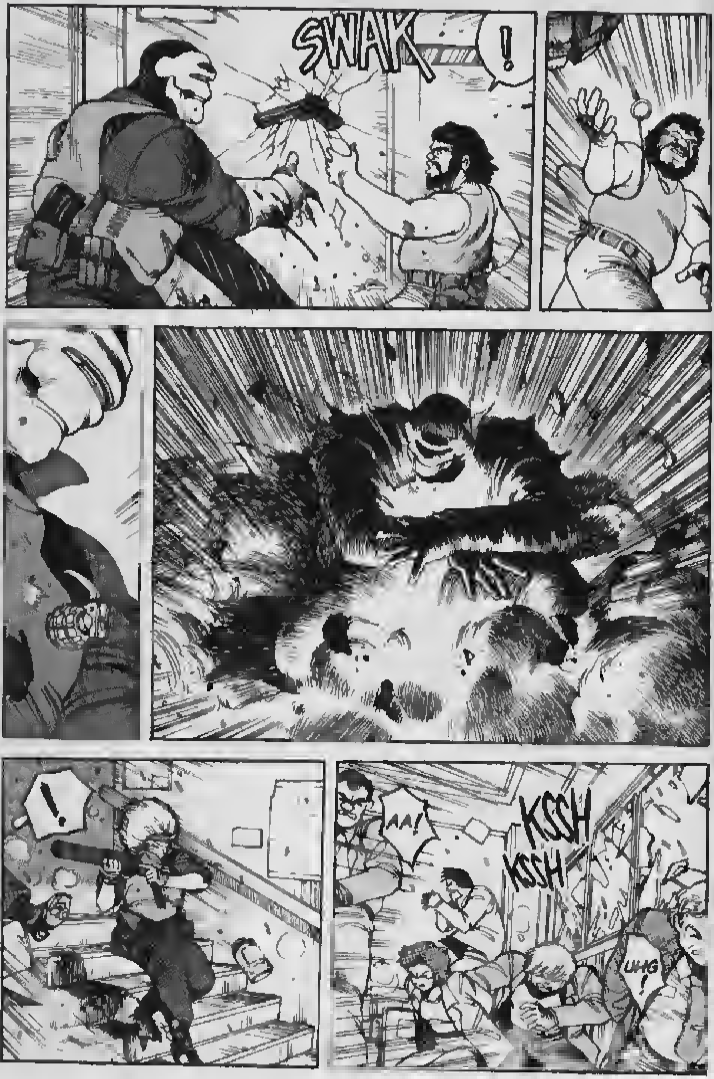
WHP
WHP
WHP
WHP
WHP
WHP
huh?
WHP
WHP
WHP
WHP
LISTEN UP IN THERE! WE DON'T HAVE THE TWENTY ATTACK HELI-COPTERS YOU'RE ASKING FOR!
WHAT WE CAN DO IS GUARANTEE YOU SAFE PASSAGE TO THE AIRPORT! BUT FIRST, RELEASE THE CHILDREN!
POLICE
POLICE
STOP JERKING US AROUND!
WHP
WHP
WHP
KCHAK
YOU'VE GOT FIVE MINUTES BEFORE WE START WASTING HOSTAGES -- KIDS FIRST!
POLICE

WRAM
GAAH!
POLICE
WHP WHP
HUH!
GARGE! THEY'VE CHANGED NEGOTI-ATORS ON US AGAIN!
WHP WHP
DON'T LEAVE YOUR POST, YOU IDIOT!
WHP WHP
WHP WHP WHP WHP

WHP
WHP
WHP
WHP
WHP
THE SNIPERS AT THE BACK GOT THE WATCHDOG, BUT THE ASSAULT SQUAD IS STILL...
WHP WHP
QUIET!
SIR... SOME OF THE OLDER HOSTAGES HAVE RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS...
IT'S JUST A DUMMY GRENADE --NO GAS.
WE CAN'T EVEN USE SMOKE...
Tak Tak
.....
POF

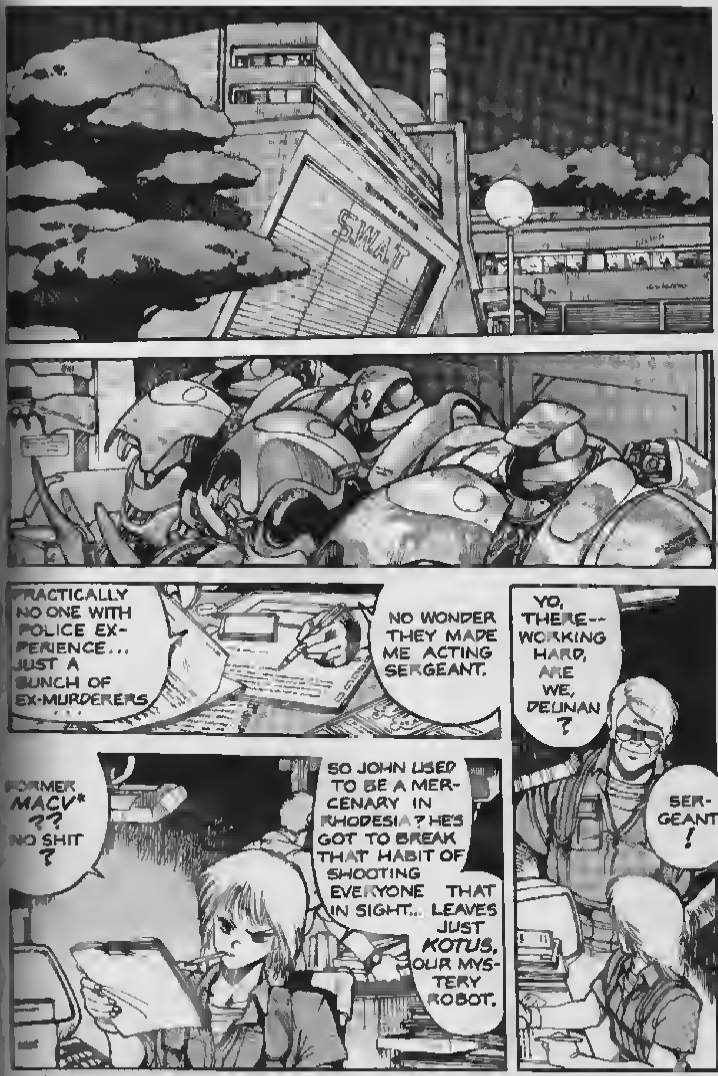
HEY! OPERATIONAL BRIEFING-- EVERYBODY IN!
KSSH
WHA---?
GAS?! WHEN WE'VE GOT HOSTAGES? GET YOUR MASKS ON!
THE SMELL.... IT'S NOT..!
HIT THE DECK!!
BRRRRRT
BADAM
EEK!
PAKZAK
AAAA!

HEY !!
UHG !
BRRRT
!
KOTUS !!
THEY'RE SWAT !
!
WHSST
HEAD FOR THE NEXT--
SKCH
!!


SWAK
!
!
AA!
KSCH
KSCH
YUHG
!

OWW...
Heh, heh...
VNNNNN
KRAK
NO! DON'T PULP HIM!
THAT ONE WE ARREST. INVESTI-GATIONS WANTS HIM.

HE'S A CYBORG, SO MAKE SURE YOU GIVE HIM A REAL SEARCH. REMOVE ANY DETACHABLE LIMBS
AND DON'T LET ANYONE DOWN THIS CORRIDOR EXCEPT FORENSICS. I'LL DO THE REPORT.
ALL RIGHT, WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA HERE?
THIS IS JUST TOO MUCH, EVEN FOR BREAKING THEIR MORALE. PUBLIC OPINION IS ALWAYS DOWN ON THIS SORT OF THING!
YOU HEARD ME SAY NOT TO USE SHOTGUNS BECAUSE OF THE HOSTAGES, DIDN'T YOU?
THIS IS THE SAME THING! THINK A BIT ABOUT WHAT "POLICE" REALLY MEANS, OK?
I KNOW, I KNOW. JUST GO BACK TO HEADQUARTERS AND GET SOME REST.
EVEN ROBOTS LAST LONGER THAT WAY.
.....

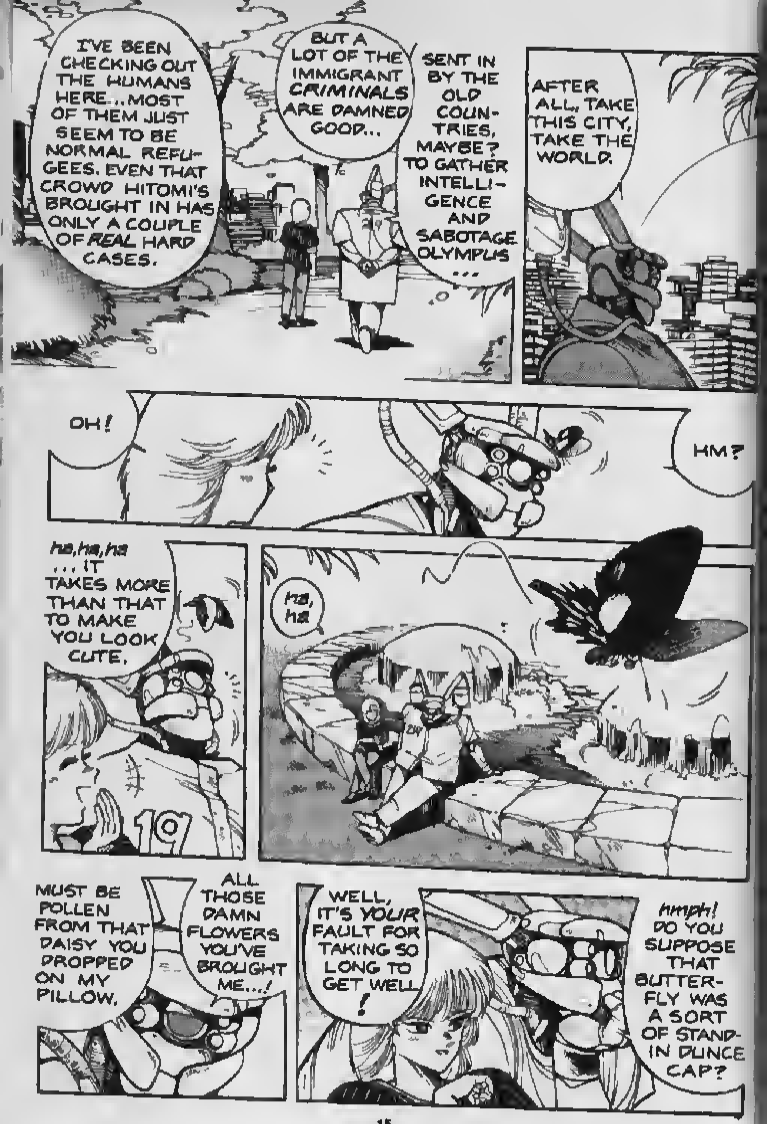

S.W.A.T.
PRACTICALLY NO ONE WITH POLICE EXPERIENCE... JUST A BUNCH OF EX-MURDERERS...
NO WONDER THEY MADE ME ACTING SERGEANT.
YO, THERE-- WORKING HARD, ARE WE, DELINAN?
SERGEANT!
FORMER MACV* ?? NO SHIT?
SO JOHN USED TO BE A MERCENARY IN RHODESIA? HE'S GOT TO BREAK THAT HABIT OF SHOOTING EVERYONE IN SIGHT... THAT LEAVES JUST KOTUS, OUR MYSTERY ROBOT.

*MACV: CIA SPECIAL OPERATIONS GROUP.

TODAY WAS JUST TOO MUCH! EVERYTHING WAS SO SCREWED UP, IT'S A MIRACLE WE AREN'T ALL DEAD!
THEY DON'T HAVE A SENSE OF MISSION-- THEIR TEAMWORK STINKS! JUST LOOK AT THIS REPORT, SERGEANT! PAGE AFTER PAGE!
THEY'RE WELL-TRAINED, BUT THEY'RE SO SLOW!
SORRY ABOUT THIS... BUT I WAS CALLED IN BY CHIEF OF STAFF NIKE HERSELF. TOOK FOREVER
NIKE? ONE OF THOSE POLITICOS?
WHAT DID WE DO TO BRING THAT BUNCH OF ANIMALS DOWN ON US?
I'VE GOT MY DOUBTS, BECAUSE YOU'RE SO YOUNG ...BUT I AGREE THAT THIS TEAM IS NO PLACE FOR A PRO OF YOUR CALIBER. SO...
ACTUALLY, IT WAS ABOUT YOU...
?!
YOU'VE BEEN HEAD-HUNTED?!

YEAH, FOR SOME SWAT UNIT DEALING WITH SPECIAL CRIMES, REPORTING DIRECTLY TO ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR ATHENA.
I'LL GET THE DETAILS WHEN I MEET THEM LATER TODAY.
WELL, HUH!
ANYWAY, IT'LL MOSTLY BE STUDY AND SPECIAL TRAINING AT FIRST. I'LL STILL BE ABLE TO COME SEE YOU, THOUGH.
WATCH IT... TRAINING ACCIDENTS ARE A GREAT WAY TO GET RID OF UNDESIRABLES.
219
I DON'T THINK YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT AT FIRST, BUT DON'T LET THEM KNOW WHAT YOU DO
SEE THAT GUY UNDER THE TREE THERE?
HE'S ARMED.
LOOKS LIKE A P7* UNDER THOSE WHITES. TO A CIVILIAN HE'D LOOK CLEAN...
SILVER BULLETS HURT PLENTY, MY BOY!
SINCE WHEN AM I A WOLFMAN, HUH?
219
ANYWAY, THEY'VE OBVIOUSLY GOT ME MARKED.
TAKE MORE THAN A 9MM TO STOP ME.
...AND I'LL BET THEY'VE BEEN TAILING YOU AS WELL.
OH, YEAH, YEAH...

*P7: FROM HECKLER & KOCH OF WEST GERMANY. A GAS-OPERATED DELAYED-BLOWBACK 9MM PISTOL USED FOR CLOSE COMBAT AND STEALTH OPERATIONS.

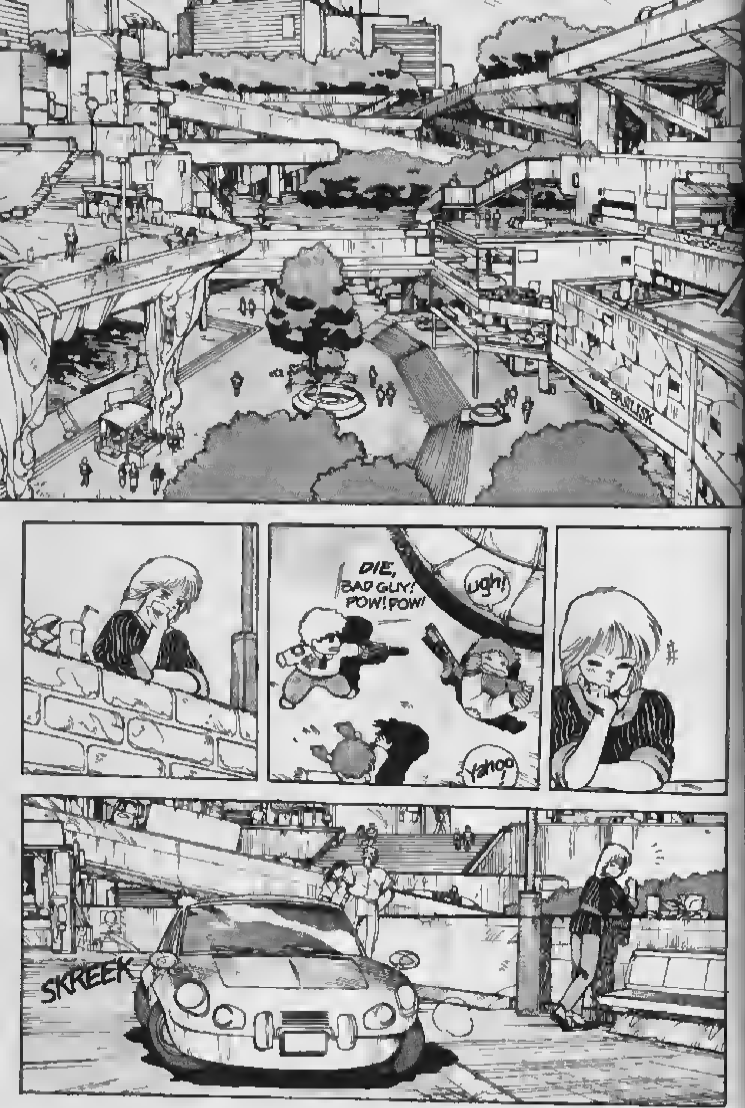

I'VE BEEN CHECKING OUT THE HUMANS HERE...MOST OF THEM JUST SEEM TO BE NORMAL REFUGEES. EVEN THAT CROWD HITOMI'S BROUGHT IN HAS ONLY A COUPLE OF REAL HARD CASES.
BUT A LOT OF THE IMMIGRANT CRIMINALS ARE DAMNED GOOD...
SENT IN BY THE OLD COUNTRIES, MAYBE? TO GATHER INTELLIGENCE AND SABOTAGE OLYMPUS ...
AFTER ALL, TAKE THIS CITY, TAKE THE WORLD.
OH!
HM?
ha,ha,ha ...IT TAKES MORE THAN THAT TO MAKE YOU LOOK CUTE.
ha, ha.
MUST BE POLLEN FROM THAT DAISY YOU DROPPED ON MY PILLOW.
ALL THOSE DAMN FLOWERS YOU'VE BROUGHT ME...!
WELL, IT'S YOUR FAULT FOR TAKING SO LONG TO GET WELL!
hmph! DO YOU SUPPOSE THAT BUTTERFLY WAS A SORT OF STAND-IN DUNCE CAP?

OHO... GREETINGS, GREETINGS!
HI.
THANK YOU EVER SO MUCH, DOCTOR!
AH, IT WAS NOTHING, I ASSURE YOU. SUCH A POLITE YOUNG LADY, heh, heh...
SAY, YOU WERE ON THE TELE-FORM LAST NIGHT, WEREN'T YOU?
THOSE FIVE TERRORISTS WITH THE HOSTAGES! I HAD NO IDEA YOU WERE WITH SWAT!
YOU SAW ME...? OH! WHEN I WAS AT THE A.A.*
YES! YES! I SAW YOUR FACE ON THE SECURITY CAMERAS, CLEAR AS DAY!
!
MISSED THE CLIMAX, THOUGH. DRAT IT ALL.
OH, DEAR! WHAT A SHAME! heh, heh...
SHE GOT IN THE TEAM'S WAY SO MUCH SHE'S BEEN TRANS-FERRED ANYWAY, DOCTOR.
THROWN OUT ON HER ASS-- ALL VERY POLITELY, OF COURSE.
Ha Ha Ha
HAP-PENS ALL THE TIME!
219

*A.A: ASSEMBLY AREA. SOMETIMES CALLED THE "STAGING AREA." THE LOCATION WHERE THE SWAT TEAM ASSEMBLES TO PICK UP WEAPONS AND GET THEIR INSTRUCTIONS.

BY THE WAY... WHEN CAN HE COME HOME ?
hrmph! WHY DO YOU KEEP ON ASKING ME THAT ?!
DON'T YOU WORRY, YOUNG LADY. THERE ISN'T AN INJURY OR DISEASE WE CAN'T CURE HERE IN OLYMPUS.
WE CAN EXTEND LONGEVITY ...IN FACT, WE'RE ONLY A STEP AWAY FROM IMMORTALITY.
DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S GOING A LITTLE TOO FAR? OR THEN AGAIN...
EXACTLY, EXACTLY !
WHAT FOLKS WANT AND WHAT NATURE DECREES ARE IN CONSTANT CONFLICT.
LOOK AT THIS EARTH HERE!
IT'S A FINE BALANCE OF ORGANIC AND INORGANIC SYSTEMS, ALL WORKING IN HARMONY... IT'S LIKE A SINGLE, MASSIVE, LIVING ORGANISM.
BUT THEN HUMANS COME ALONG AND TEAR INTO IT! USE IT UP! POLLUTE IT!
THEY'VE EVEN SCARRED THE TROPICAL RAIN FORESTS AND THE CONTINENTAL SHELVES, THE KEY REGULATORS FOR THE ENTIRE SYSTEM.
WHOLE DAMN WORLD'D BE A MORE PEACEFUL PLACE IF THEY'D JUST LEAVE IT TO THE BIOROIDS!

OF COURSE, IF WE GO INTO SPACE, WE'LL ALL LAST LONGER. MORE ROOM UP THERE!
WE CAN SEARCH FOR SOME KIND OF "NATURE" THAT'S MORE HOSPITABLE FOR HUMANS ...
..THAT'S WHAT I THINK.
AND IT'S ALL EXPLAINED IN DETAIL IN THIS FASCINATING AND STIMULATING BOOK OF MINE! WON'T YOU BUY A COPY OR TWO?
HUMAN ALIEN
BY GEORGE, COME TO THINK OF IT, MAYBE HUMANS ARE JUST BIOROIDS USED BY THE ANCIENT ASTRONAUTS...
SILENT MATTHEW
...YES, YES .. THEY FLEW OFF, LEAVING THEIR DISCARDS BEHIND ...
AND HUMANS HAVE BEEN PUTTERING AROUND SINCE...
...hmm ...yes...
SO, THEN... WHEN ARE YOU COMING HOME?
GOD ONLY KNOWS.
219
YOU'RE NOT LOSING ANY WEIGHT ...
MY WALLET'S GOTTEN LIGHTER !!


DIE, BAD GUY! POW! POW!
ugh!
yahoo
SKREEK

CHAK
DEUNAN KNUTE ?
MY NAME'S NIKE.
EH ?
I, ER, I'M PLEASED TO MEET YOU!
I RECOGNIZED YOU FROM YOUR FILE PHOTOGRAPHS.
HOP IN.
WHAT A GRIP!
NIKE...? YOU MEAN CHIEF OF STAFF NIKE?!
B-BUT WHERE'S THE SECRET SERVICE? ARE YOU HER DOUBLE?!
FROM A BROADER PERSPECTIVE, EVERYONE HERE IS A V.I.P. --EVERYONE IS ESSENTIAL. BUT THERE'S ALSO A PRACTICAL REASON FOR PICKING YOU UP MYSELF. I'M GOING BACK TO ATHENA'S OFFICE, AND YOU WERE ON MY WAY.
BAM

AREN'T YOU WORRIED ABOUT TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AGAINST HIGH OFFICIALS LIKE YOURSELF ...?
WE'RE NOT COMPLETELY NAIVE, YOU KNOW.
THE WATCHDOG COMMITTEE IS READY AND EAGER TO TEAR INTO LAST NIGHT'S HOSTAGE INCIDENT.
YOU PEOPLE IGNORED CONDITIONS ON THE BACK STAIRS AND THE FRONT ENTRANCE. INADEQUATE EFFORTS TO NEGOTIATE A SURRENDER, EXCESSIVE USE OF FORCE...
I'LL ADMIT THERE WERE PROBLEMS WITH THE FINAL ASSAULT. BUT WE WERE UP AGAINST PROS! NO OPERATION EVER GOES BY THE BOOK.
SKREEK!
IN THIS CITY...
..WE'VE MADE CRIMINOLOGY A SCIENCE, TO PROVIDE CHECKS AND BALANCES AGAINST STATE AUTHORITY.

WE SATISFY, AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, THE DESIRES OF THE MASSES. WE'RE A UTOPIAN CITY.
YEAH, WELL, ONE OF THE CRIMINALS WHO ATTACKED GAIA CALLED IT A WASTE-LAND.
CAN SOMEONE SITTING ON THE S DELINES UNDERSTAND THE GAME OF POLITICS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL? IS A TREE AN ACCURATE MODEL OF THE FOREST?
OR ARE YOU REALLY THAT PAS-SIVE ...?
ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT ME FOR THIS?
THE ESWAT* SPECIAL ACTION TEAM DOESN'T ACCEPT RESIGNATIONS, DELINAN.
BESIDES, THIS ISN'T JUST A TRANS-FER-- YOU'LL BE SERVING A NEW BOSS.

*ESWAT: EXTRA SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS.

ONE OF THE LEGISLATIVE BODIES HAS STARTED TAKING ACTION ON ITS OWN, OR SO WE SUSPECT.
BUT ISN'T THAT THE DIRECTOR'S PROBLEM?
THEY'VE BEEN COLLECTING ALL THE PEOPLE STILL OUT IN BADSIDE WHOSE GENETIC MATERIAL WAS USED IN THE FIRST GENERATION OF BIOROIDS. THAT MAKES IT *OUR* PROBLEM.
EVERYONE INVOLVED IN THE GAIA INCIDENT WAS IN THAT GROUP-- NOT TO MENTION *YOU*.
ME ?!?
TO BE PRECISE, HALF OF YOU.
YOUR FATHER, CARL KNUTE ... A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE WALKING AROUND WITH HIS GENETIC DATA IN THEIR CHROMOSOMES.

MY FATHER WAS PART OF THIS ...?
I WONDER WHY HE REFUSED OUR INVITATION TO IMMIGRATE HERE.
HOW IS HE THESE DAYS, ANYWAY?
.....
BUT, WHY ME? I'M JUST A PAWN OF THE LEGISLATURE, AREN'T I?
TRUTH IS THE STRONGEST WEAPON, HONESTY THE BEST STRATEGY.
WHY BE A PAWN IF YOU CAN BE A KNIGHT?
THANKS FOR THE GENEROSITY!
WE'RE BEING TAILED.
WHAT?
IF THEY'RE TERRORISTS, COUNT ME OUT. I'VE GOT NO INTENTION OF GETTING HURT IN ONE OF YOUR LITTLE WARS.

*FBI: NOT THE OLD AMERICAN MODEL, BUT THE HIGHEST PRIORITY POLICE ORGANIZATION IN OLYMPUS, CHARGED WITH INVESTIGATING BIOROID ACTIVITIES.

"UNAUTHORIZED VISITORS WILL BE SHOT. AEGIS ACADEMY OF CRIME ELIMINATION."
VRMMM
SKREEK
DAD, YOU S.O.B., WHAT DID YOU GET ME INTO ...?
HE'S STAYING IN THE CIVVIE AREA. SO HOW DO YOU LIKE BEING A V.I.P., MS. KNUTE?
HE MUST BE OFF-DUTY--

I CAME HERE TO SHAKE OUR FBI FRIEND, BUT I MAY AS WELL PICK UP SOME DOCU-MENTS WHILE I'M HERE.
YOU WAIT OUTSIDE. WATCH THE TRAINING OR SOME-THING.
!
KOTUS ?!

EVENTUALLY WE PLAN TO STATION ROBOT POLICE AROUND THE WORLD. THAT'S ONE OF THE MASTER TEST MODELS -- JUST ONE OF TEN.
III
HEADHUNTED, DEUNAN, JUST LIKE YOU.
I HEAR THEY'RE OUTFITTING HIM WITH HIGH-SENSITIVITY MIKES, REBUILDING HIM FOR GREATER SPEED, AND MORE.
CAN THAT TACTICAL IDIOT REALLY BE OF ANY USE TO ANYBODY?
I'LL BE JUST A MINUTE.
TOGETHER FOREVER ...?
!
...
BRTTTT
BAM BABAM
YEEK!
huh?
ALL RIGHT, FEAZELL, YOU JUST DIED IN THE LINE OF DUTY!
GET OVER BEHIND THE FIRING LINE AND WATCH THE SHOW WITH THE OTHER CORPSES!

HYAH !
NEVER LET GO! YOU GOT A BRICK FOR A BRAIN ?
Tik Tik
Tik
WHAAAT ?! YOU'RE USING BUSH-MASTERS INDOORS?!
YEAH, WE'RE SIMULATIN' A CYBORG HOS-TAGE SITUATION. WE'RE GONNA--
HEY! WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?! THIS AIN'T NO PLACE FER KIDS!
klik
YOU %&#*!!
WAP
.....

THIS ISN'T SOME KIND OF JOKE, IS IT? YOU'RE REALLY SIGNING HER ON?
SHE'S HAD A LONGER CAREER THAN YOU, LIEUTENANT. FRONT LINE STUFF. BUT WE REALLY JUST WANT TO TIE HER DOWN-- YOU DON'T HAVE TO USE HER.
VERY WELL...
!
HHK!
KSSH
KLIK

KCHAK
NO! WAIT! I WAS JUST ...
UGG ...
WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE !?
TRAINING A ROOKIE ...?
DON'T MOVE !!
AND JUST WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, hmm?
NOW, DON'T GET ANY FUNNY IDEAS ...
THIS IS ALREADY ...REGRET-TABLE.
!

DON'T YOU GET ANY FUNNY IDEAS EITHER
I DISLIKE BEING STALKED
KLIK
OWWW ...SON OF A BITCH ...
YOU OKAY, SON ?
ALL THAT STEALTH TRAINING SHOT! AND BY THAT DAMNED YOUNG BRAT!
YOU'RE A TOUGH ONE, AREN'T YOU?
LET ME INTRODUCE YOU -- THIS IS LIEUTENANT TOWERS.
PEUNAN, SIR HEH HEH, HEH ...
WE'LL SLIP OUT THROUGH THE ARCO-ZONE AND GO ON TO SEE ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR ATHENA. THAT OUGHT TO DO IT FOR INTRODUCTIONS TODAY
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT! STOP GAWKING AND BACK TO WORK!
...

.....
WELL, I GUESS MARKSMEN COME IN MANY FORMS
YOU'RE HARDLY WHAT I EXPECTED FROM READING YOUR FILE.
.....
YES, MA'AM.
I HAVE HER TRANS-FER PAPERS HERE ...
I'LL SEE TO THEM.
SHE DOESN'T HAVE ANY MILI-TARY EXPER-IENCE ...?
ZERO COMBAT FATIGUE, NO OTHER PROBLEMS --WE CHECKED.

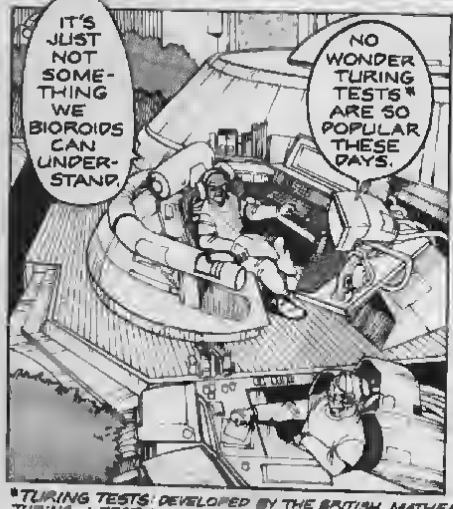
NO UNDER-WATER TRAINING? NO SKY-DIVING?
AND YOU'RE WEAK IN MARTIAL ARTS...
THIS IS ALL HIGHLY IRREGULAR, BUT WE JUST HAPPEN TO BE SHORT ONE ASSAULT-MAN.
COME WITH ME.
GOOD DAY.
BAM
ANY CHANCE SHE'S A DOUBLE AGENT?
MAYBE OUT IN BADSIDE--NOT HERE.
GOOD ENOUGH, THEN.
WELL, WE'VE GOT OUR SURVEILLANCE IN PLACE, AND WE'VE ISOLATED THE THIRTY MOST DANGEROUS PEOPLE THE COUNCIL BROUGHT IN.
SO WHY ARE THEY TAKING THIS LYING DOWN?
HERE ARE THE MINUTES FOR THE WEEKLY MEETING, MA'AM.
OH, THAT REMINDS ME. THE LEGISLATIVE BUDGET COMMITTEE WANTS A PANEL APPOINTED TO STUDY THE NEW POLICE PROPOSAL.
NOT AGAIN!

CAN I HELP ?
NO, NO, I'M JUST FINE. WOULDN'T WANT THINGS TO GET MIXED UP.
WHAT DATA ARE YOU WORKING ON ?
THE OPTIMUM RESPONSES OF OLYMPUS TO ERRORS COMMITTED BY THE HUMAN RACE.

HITOMI ...
ABOUT THOSE GUINEA PIGS ON LIST ONE..
UM... THE LAST TWO APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN LIQUIDATED. OH, YES...
?
THE CRIMES OF HUMANITY, YOU MIGHT SAY
REMEMBER THE LAST ONE I BROUGHT IN? ATHENA GOT HER.
THAT'S ALL RIGHT FOR NOW. WE WON'T BE USING THEM IN THE LAST GAMBLE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "THE CRIMES OF HUMANITY" ...?
HMMMM... LET ME KEEP IT SIMPLE.

IT'S IRONIC, BUT THE LAST WAR, NON-NUCLEAR, GAVE US A NEW LEASE ON LIFE.
BUT ONLY A TEMPORARY ONE. IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE SO-CALLED "PROGRESS" SINCE THE WAR BALANCES THE ACCOUNT.

NOW YOU'RE TALKING EFFECT, NOT CAUSE.
I'D SAY THE CAUSE LIES IN MISTAKING EXTRAVAGANCE AND LAZINESS FOR "PEACE"
IT'S THEIR DIS-TORTED SENSE OF HAPPI-NESS...



*TURING TESTS: DEVELOPED BY THE BRITISH MATHEMETICIAN ALAN MATHISON TURING A TEST USING CAREFULLY DESIGNED QUESTIONS TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN COMPUTER PROGRAMMING LOGIC AND HUMAN THOUGHT PROCESSES.

THE SOCIETY CREATES THE PEOPLE, AND WHEN THE PEOPLE COME TOGETHER, THEY CREATE THE SOCIETY. YOU UNDERSTAND THAT, DON'T YOU?
WELL, uh, heh...
USE ORDINARY PEOPLE, AND ALL YOU GET IS AN ORDINARY SOCIETY.
NO MATTER HOW GOOD THE SYSTEM, THE GAP KEEPS WIDENING.
IT'S THE DOMESTICATION EFFECT. SAFE IN SOCIETY, PEOPLE LOSE THEIR ABILITY TO ADAPT TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE. THEY BECOME TOO DEPENDENT ON THE GOVERNMENT, THEY LOSE THEIR WILLPOWER, CHANNEL STRESS INTO AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR... IN SHORT, THEY RESTRICT THEIR OWN OPTIONS.
UNABLE TO COPE WITH ALL THE COMFORT, THEY FORGET THE MEANING OF WORK, FAMILY, EDUCATION...
BUT THAT'S INEVITABLE, ISN'T IT?
IF IT REALLY IS INEVITABLE, WE MIGHT AS WELL QUIT AND GO HOME.
AMERICA, THE SOVIET UNION, CHINA, ROME...
I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK OF SCIPIO*

*SCIPIO (THE ELDER): THE FAMOUS ROMAN GENERAL. UPON SEEING HANNIBAL'S CARTHAGE IN FLAMES, HE IS SAID TO HAVE REMARKED, "AND SOMEDAY ROME."

LET'S NOT WASTE ANY MORE TIME STARTING TOMORROW YOU JOIN A TEN-DAY EXERCISE ON PROTECTING GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND RESIDENCES.
YES, SIR!
A NEW POLICE SYSTEM?
WE'RE INTRODUCING EIGHT LARGE, MULTI-LEGGED WEAPONS PLATFORMS
WE WANT THE NEW POLICE SYSTEM ON LINE BEFORE LANDMATES GO ON PUBLIC SALE.
TERRORISTS MAY USE THE EXPECTED OPPOSITION DEMONSTRATIONS AS COVER FOR AN ATTACK.
SOUNDS MORE LIKE AN ARMY.
IT IS.
THE POLITICIANS SAY WE NEED THEM TO DEAL WITH ANY PLOTS BY THE OLD SUPER-POWERS
DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT'S EXPECTED OF YOU TOMORROW?
NONE, SIR.
THEN YOU'RE DISMISSED.
YES, SIR!
WELL, WELL.

GEE, YOSHI ...
DO YOU THINK OUR SENSE OF HAPPINESS IS "DISTORTED" ...?
HUH? HAPPINESS ??
WELL, THAT'S WHAT THOSE OLD GUYS ...
HITOMI, SORRY ABOUT THIS, BUT I'VE SET UP A BOOBY TRAP FOR BURGLARS IN MY ROOM. IF YOU WANT TO SEE ME, BETTER USE THE INTERCOM.
DEUNAN, WHAT DOES HAPPINESS ALL MEAN?
ME!
IT MEANS ME.
? ? ? ? ?

hff
hff
hff
FUMP
THERE!
GOOD NIGHT, BRIAREOS.
z